



Learner's Guide: Mindful Ageing

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Mindful Ageing



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Introduction to the Programme

The Mindful Ageing project aims to provide tools and resources to people aged 50+ to help them to maintain a healthy and positive mindset and an active approach to ageing.

Through tools such as mindfulness, clinical hypnosis and neuro-linguistic programming (NLP), the programme aims to improve the health and wellbeing of older citizens as well as tackling loneliness.

This pack supports our Mindful Ageing Support Groups and will outline what to expect as a participant.

You can also benefit from our Mindful Ageing Bootcamps and an online platform which includes further resources and support for active ageing.

The Mindful Ageing Support Groups: Methodology

Mindful Ageing Support Groups are based upon mentoring and coaching methodology. The Support Group methodology has been adapted from Inova Consultancy's award winning Circles methodology and training established in 2001. It is based upon action learning, coaching and mentoring techniques. It uses self-reflection exercises to promote goal setting and to help participants build and develop their soft skills such as confidence and self-efficacy.

A skilled facilitator will guide participants to set actions (e.g. attend an hour long yoga class every week) and the group will support each other to achieve these goals. Groups will be supported to work together and become self-sustaining. The aim is to build local networks and combat feelings of isolation. This methodology gives a sense of ownership to the participants as group members are actively engaged in supporting each other.

The methodology will provide you with an opportunity to set positive goals and actions to promote long term mental wellbeing. Support groups offer a safe environment in which to discuss lifestyle changes, habits and goals such as exercise, meditation, voluntary work and social support groups. The aim is to help you to take positive steps in your lives and to engage with mindfulness techniques.

Contact details

Facilitator

Name	
Email address	

Support Group members:

Use the space below to write down the names of your fellow support group participants and any notes which may help you to remember and get to know them better.

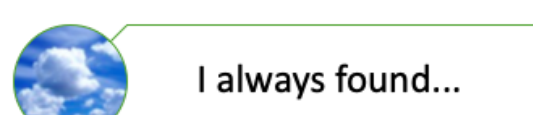
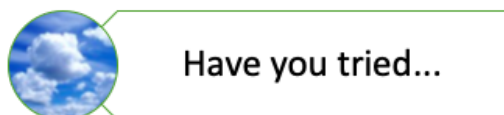
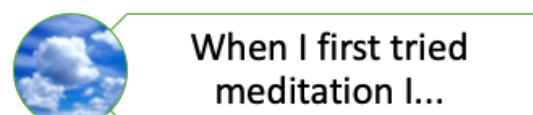
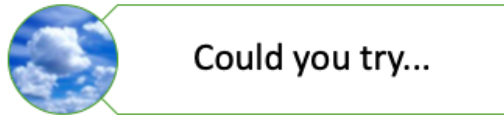
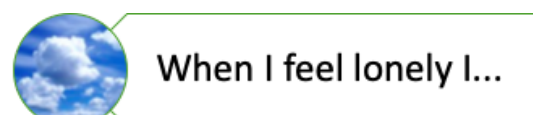
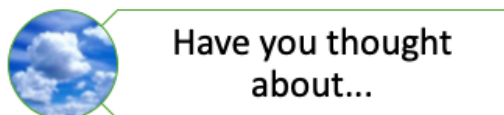
Name	Notes

Questioning Technique

Throughout the support group sessions, each person will be given the opportunity to speak and share their goals for the week. The following information will provide you with an outline of 'the questioning technique' which all participants should adhere to throughout the support group sessions. This will enable each person to have their voices heard and to be given effective support and encouragement from their fellow group members.

THE PRESENTER: The person speaking about their challenges/ goals/ opportunities in their given time slot. The presenter is encouraged to specify what they would like to gain and what they need. They should regulate contributions from other participants and should initiate input from others if it is required.

Advice giving may be unhelpful when it directs you towards a particular way of thinking or a certain course of action. Questioning instead of advice giving, helps to empower others to find their own solutions. Avoid sentences such as:



Offering advice in these ways can be detrimental to others learning as it does not encourage the presenter to develop their problem solving skills. Always avoid unhelpful comments such as 'if I were in your situation I would...'

However occasionally some types of advice, when specifically asked for, can be helpful. For example, a presenter might ask for advice about contacts or possible networks.

For example: 'I'm experiencing loneliness and want to meet new people in my area. Does anyone have any recommendations of groups I can join?'

This may be appropriate; it may be helpful to provide them with some suggestions and recommendations for groups they can join in the local area. However; the advice also offers room for caveats (not a single path which solves all their issues). You, as the presenter, would need to take responsibility and check out the

credibility of the adviser. **Remember that the Circle is not a substitute for professional advice. Sometimes learning from others can provide a useful shortcut.**

Ground Rules

It is important that all participants have mutual respect for each other and the expectations of the sessions. Each support group should therefore set their own ground rules which participants should agree upon and follow. Your facilitator will help you to do this.

The following suggestions may provide some topics to think about:

- ★ Confidentiality
- ★ Attendance and commitment
- ★ Use of time
- ★ Questioning and levels of challenge
- ★ Giving feedback
- ★ Respect
- ★ Communication style
- ★ How to help others in the group- different types of helping, what do people prefer?
What helps and what hinders?

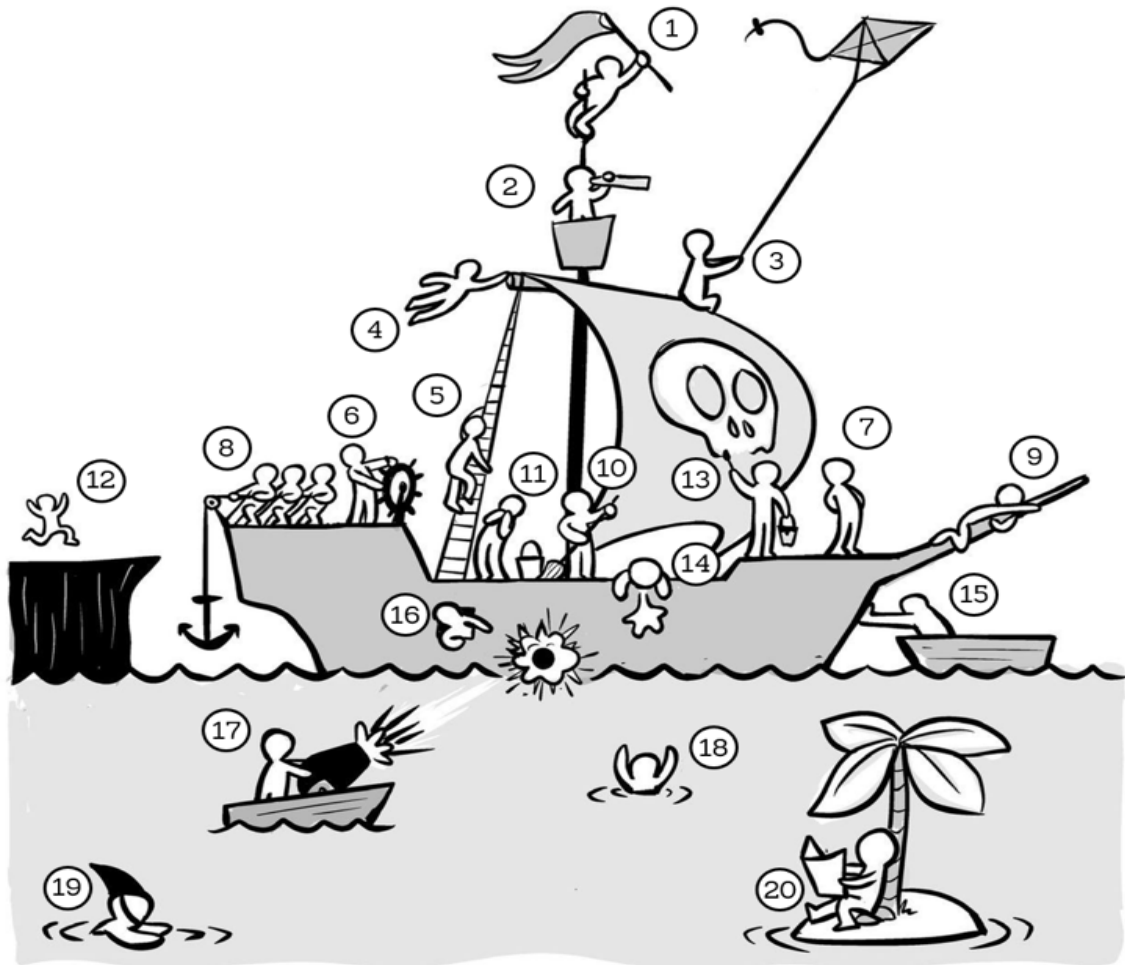
Agreeing upon ground rules in the first session will ensure that everyone feels comfortable and safe to express themselves and share their experiences of, and attitudes towards, ageing and mindfulness.

Support Group Tools

The following pages will provide you with some of the tools which can be used throughout the support group sessions. You can use these pages to write notes, goals or any interesting thoughts you may have whilst using these tools.

The Pirate Ship Exercise¹

The aim of this exercise is to allow you to reflect on how you feel about joining the support group and your initial attitudes towards mindfulness and ageing generally. Look at the image below and think about what number represents how you are feeling. Share with the group your chosen number and explain why you chose it.



¹ <https://www.sessionlab.com/methods/who-are-you-the-ship-exercise>

Old Woman/ Young Woman

The meaning of this exercise is that we often get 'stuck' seeing ourselves, our lives or specific situations in certain ways. Encourage participants to reflect on how they view ageing and the impact it may have on them. Are the assumptions we make correct? How can we view / approach ageing in a more positive light?

When you look at the picture, ask yourself whether you see an old lady or a young lady? Most people look at the picture and see one thing first - either the old or young lady. If you can't see both, ask someone else to take a look and see what they can see. Ask another group member who can see both to explain how.



SMART Goals²

Turning your wishes and goals into SMART goals will make them more achievable! For each wish you have for your business, try and make it SMART by following the structure below.

Step 1: Write down a wish/goal that you would like to achieve

Wish/Goal:

Step 2: How can you make your wish/goal SMART? Answer the following questions to find out!

S	<p><u>Specific</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you want to accomplish? • Why do I want to accomplish this? • What are the requirements? • What are the constraints? 	
M	<p><u>Measurable:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How will I measure my progress? • How will I know when my goal is accomplished? 	
A	<p><u>Achievable:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can the goal be achieved? • What are the next steps I should take? 	
R	<p><u>Relevant:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is this a worthwhile goal? • Is this the right time? • Do I have the necessary resources to accomplish this goal? • Is this goal in line with my long-term vision? 	
T	<p><u>Time-Bound:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How long will it take to accomplish this goal? • When is the completion of this goal due? • When am I going to work on this goal? 	



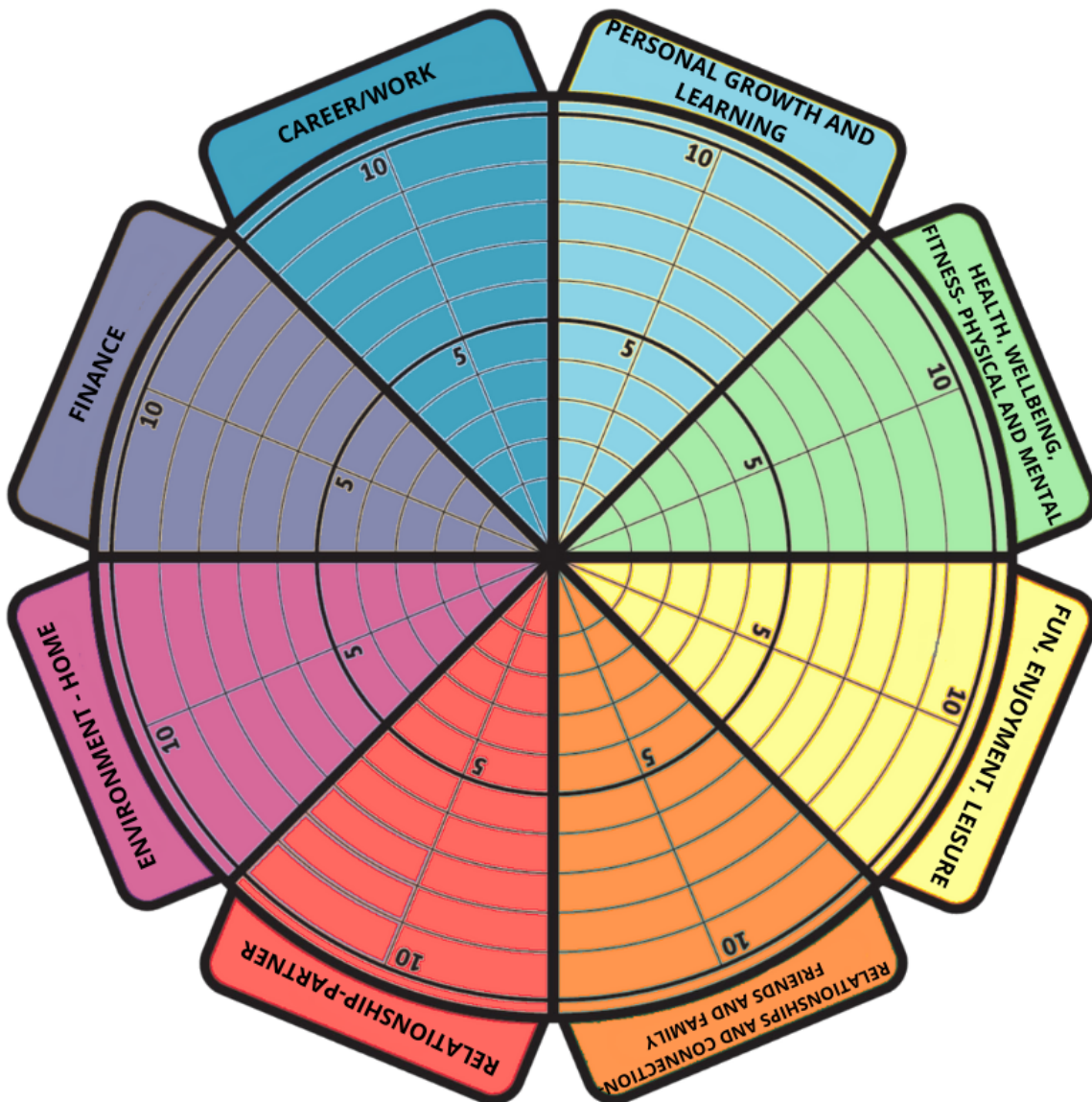
² Inspired by the SMART Goals acronym shown here, for example:

<https://corporatefinanceinstitute.com/resources/knowledge/other/smart-goal/>

Wheel of Life

This exercise is designed to help you reflect upon your life and think about how you spend your time and the aspects of your life which you may like to improve upon.

You should think about how you would like to divide your 'wheel of life'. Each wheel should be divided into 8 slices. You should then mark a dot on each section of the wheel. This will represent your overall satisfaction with that area in your life. This can be scored from 0-10 whereby 0 represents zero satisfaction and 10 represents complete fulfilment.



Exercise 8: My Vision Board

Create your own vision board for the future. Focus upon how you envisage your retirement and older age. The aim of this is to allow you to explore and visualise your goals for the future. Below is a template which you may like to use or add to.



Meditation Resources:

After completing the Mindful Ageing support groups and having learnt about the benefits of mindfulness, you will hopefully want to continue your mindfulness practice. Below are some resources including meditation scripts and practices which will help you to continue your mindfulness journey at home:

- Oxford Mindfulness Centre: resources and free audio practices
<https://www.oxfordmindfulness.org/learn-mindfulness/resources/>
- Insight Timer: an app for sleep, anxiety and stress with more than 100,000 guided meditations. <https://insighttimer.com/en-gb>
- Positive Psychology: 22 mindfulness exercises for adults
<https://positivepsychology.com/mindfulness-exercises-techniques-activities/>
- Every Mind Matters: mindfulness breathing exercise
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=wfDTp2GogaQ>
- The Coaching Tools Company: guided meditation scripts
<https://www.thecoachingtoolscompany.com/de-stress-series-relax-clients-in-under-5-mins-guided-meditation-scripts/>

Bullet Journaling: Resources and Information

Below you will find some further information and resources about bullet journaling. Bullet journaling is a practice combining organisation and journaling with mindfulness. The creator of the practice, Ryder Carroll, describes it as 'a mindfulness practice disguised as a productivity system.'

The practice encourages you to live your life with intention and provides a method of journaling which focuses upon goal planning. A bullet journal includes: a monthly log (a calendar of deadlines, events and reminders for the month), a future log (for long term goals), a daily log (day to-do lists) and lists and collections (a list of things that are important to you).



For more information see the resources below:

- Bullet Journal official website: <https://bulletjournal.com/pages/about>
- Amanda Rach-Lee Youtube channel: 104 bullet journaling videos. <https://www.youtube.com/c/amandarachlee/videos>
- Pick up Limes Youtube Video: minimal bullet journaling set up for productivity and mindfulness <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZK5VUuxGYr0>
- Big Think Youtube Video: Bullet Journaling 101: Mindfulness Meets Productivity from Ryder Carroll (creator of bullet journaling) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oFUrfAUNiys>

Learner Log

Below is an example of a learner log which you can complete after each session. This can be used to make notes, write down any goals you have set or any interesting thoughts stemming from the group discussion.

Date of session:		
Topics of discussion	Notes	SMART goal

Partners



COORDINATOR
Inova Consultancy (United Kingdom)
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IED- Institute of Entrepreneurship Development (Greece)
<https://ied.eu/>



E- Seniors (France)
<https://www.eseniors.eu/>



CCS (Ireland)
<https://ccseducation.com/>



VAMK (Finland)
<https://www.vamk.fi/fi/>



BICC- Business Information and Consulting Centre (Bulgaria)
<https://www.bicc-sandanski.org/>